

THE
HERALD OF ZION;

BEING A SERIES OF

ESSAYS, ADDRESSES,

&c.,

Relating to the Christian Ministry,

BY AN ASSOCIATION OF

Primitive Methodist Ministers,

CANADA.

"Who is sufficient for these things."

TORONTO:

THOMAS CUTTELL & SON, PRINTERS, KING STREET.

1856.

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BRIDGE & WILKINS

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BY AN ASSOCIATION OF

Primitive Methodist Ministers

LONDON.

Printed by W. L. G. for the Association.

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THOMAS CUTLER & CO., PRINTERS, 11, ST. MARK'S LANE.

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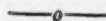
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DEDICATION.

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TO MY FAITHFUL

AND AFFECTIONATE FRIEND,

THE

REV. WM. LYLE,

WHOSE CALMNESS IN TRIAL,

INFLEXIBLE PERSEVERENCE IN DOING GOOD,

AND ABOUNDING CHRISTIAN EXCELLENCIES,

HAVE ENDEARED HIM

TO THE AUTHOR,

JAMES EDGAR.

REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

AN ESSAY, READ AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST MINISTERS' ASSO-
CIATION, HELD AT HAMILTON, APRIL 10TH, 1856.

BY REV. JAMES EDGAR.

DEAR FATHERS AND BRETHREN,

The advancement of the Kingdom of Christ is intimately interwoven, with all that is great and good in Morals, Science, and Art, with all that is grand and sublime in connection with man's higher and eternal interests, that all other subjects, the discoveries of Navigators, the achievements of Philosophers, the triumphs of Warriors, and the world-wide renown of Statesmen, dwindle into insignificance when compared with it. All temporal things are bounded by the horizon of time, but the interests of the Redeemer's Kingdom reach on through the limitless infinities of eternity. Since that dread eclipse which passed upon man in Eden, brutalizing his nature, and devilising his soul, Revivals of Religion have been absolutely requisite. *The Church has found them invaluable.*

It must be palpably obvious, to every unprejudiced mind, that they meet the existing exigencies of the Church, exigencies every where existing, and, to be met, *only* by Revivals. Sinners are dead, the electric shocks and trumpet voices of Revivals burst the catacombs where they are immured, under successive lays of "trespasses and sins," and through the agency of the Holy Spirit, impart unto them spiritual life. Sinners are diseased, Revivals impart a healthy action to all the functions of their souls, pure their corruptions, and infuse new vigour into their spirits. Sinners are

enslaved, Revivals break the iron yoke, snap the fetters, dissolve the influence which enfeebles them, and set them at liberty. Sinners hang on the gossamer thread of life, within the huge jaws of destruction, Revivals stretch out their long, strong arms, and lift them from the very margin of the smoking pit. Never were exigencies so important, never were they so fully met.

Who can compute the value of the blessings Revivals confer? What is it, to have one's sins all blotted out, all forgiven? What is it, to be introduced into the "family of God," and become a legitimate member thereof? What is it, to have the soul washed, sanctified, made holy? What is it, to be "more than Conquerer," in the death conflict? What is it, to be ushered into, and become one of, the sinless inhabitants of heaven? What is it, to reflect the glory of God, not as the moon reflects the sun, but to absorb that glory, to have the glory of God filling the soul to overflowing? What is it, to be fanned with the zephyrs, regaled with the odours, and transported with the anthems of the "New Jerusalem"? What is it, to be an heir, a joint heir, with Jesus Christ? Tell us, ye saved ones, ye inhabitants of the upper Eden, tell us, of the glories which envelope you, of the satisfaction you enjoy, of the dignities with which you are vested, of the splendour, the magnificence, by which you are surrounded, and of the "FAR MORE, EXCEEDING, ETERNAL, WEIGHT OF GLORY," which you forever enjoy, through means of Revivals? Tell us, ye fiends reserved in fire, —enveloped ghosts of the pit; ye lost spirits, tell us what you have lost, by not yielding to the influence of Revivals? Could we take the soundings of the "Lake of fire," ascertain the nature of the "second death," and comprehend that incomprehensible calamity, the loss of the soul, then, but not till then, could we ascertain the value of the blessings secured by Revivals of Religion.

There is a requisiteness for Revivals.

Light and heat, nutriment and atmosphere, are not more essential to man's physical developement, than Revivals to

save his soul. The nature of man being opposed to spirituality, clinging with death-like tenacity to iniquity, it requires more than human agency, to induce him to let go his hold. Sin has warped the affections, biased the judgement, bewildered the intellect, shipwrecked the soul, and left the sinner stranded on the barren rocks of desolation, where he cannot help himself.

No human schooling can alter man's nature, no Philosophical acumen can regulate his intellect, no combination of effort, apart from Divine agency, can save him from impending ruin. The ties, which united man to his God have been severed, the couplings, which joined him to purity and heaven, have been loosed, and he now hurries down the inclined plane of iniquity to its fearful termination—the mid-night shades of everlasting gloom. The great master-spirit of iniquity, exerts all his once towering, but now prostituted talents, to hinder the advancement of Christ's Kingdom, and neutralize its influence. Frequently has he secured human instrumentality to assist him in this hell-work, and Parliaments and Armies have been thus employed. The infernal cabinet never discussed a greater question, than checking the aggressive operations of the kingdom of light, and never entered with greater unanimity upon any undertaking. What talents have been thus employed! What projects devised! What courage evinced! What hopes indulged! What gigantic preparations made! What herculean efforts put forth! And what success! The world in which man lives is antagonistic to spiritual interests. The upas of indifference flourishes here. The night-shade of worldly mindedness, has diffused its narcotic influence, from earth's centre to its circumference. Selfishness, the juggernaut of the Christian world, has earth for its Temple, and teeming millions for its worshippers. Fashion, the potent Goddess, waves her gilded wand, and her hosts of votaries yield a blind submission. Speculation proffers its golden hand to the mass, points them to the Elysian bowers which wealth creates, and the sensual paradise, which

its favourites enjoy. All these are exerting their influence, and it is directly opposed to piety. The deadly malaria which moves on the wings of Death, is not more destructive to the animal organization, than the atmosphere of the world, to spirituality. Are not Revivals requisite? In the greatness of her folly, the Church has, at times, tried to do without them,—vain attempt! Egypt would as soon flourish without the Nile, vegetation progress without sun-light and showers, human life exist without oxygen, as the Church progress without Revivals. It is equally true, that no substitutes can be found for them. State endowments, splendid and costly edifices, overwhelming and wealthy congregations, a talented and popular Ministry, and the contributions, of Art and Science, can no more vitalize the Church, and save souls, than roses scattered on a corpse, can cause the pulse of health again to throb in the arterial system.

The influence of Revivals is DIVINE.

There is a Divinity in them, occur when they may, a power attends them, nothing less than omnipotent. Psychology attributes their influence to the power of man's mind. We know better, the power that spread out the universe, that piled the heavens, is present in Revivals, and nothing short of that power can save souls. The spirit which brooded over the sable chaos of our world at its creation, is the same, that broods over the terrible mid-night, in the sinner's soul, illuminating that frightful abyss—the unregenerate heart, and revealing its complete depravity. Is it possible to have such an agency and influence, in active operation, without the highest advantage? Certainly not. The benefit secured in the transformation of mind or spirit, and its assimilation into the Divine nature. The prison house of the sinner's soul is broken open when the spirit descends, the dragon of his heart falls, the hell-priests are expelled; a new creation takes place, and the spirit, which was gravitating to hell, with fearful velocity, is restored to its proper orbit, and attracted to God as its true centre.

What an admirable work! How worthy of God! The material creation was sublime, when the giant mountains raised their lofty heads and leaned against the sky, when the sun first poured his golden flood over hill and sea; when music floated on every zephyr, when happiness and beauty were every where present, and "when the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God shouted for joy." But how much more glorious the "new creation" in the soul? The darkness of iniquity vanishes at the presence of the spirit; chaos becomes order, deformity is turned into beauty, misery is exchanged for happiness, and the mind, as deficient of piety, as is Sahara of vegetation, blossoms with the verdure of undying existence, and the spirit formerly an out-cast from God, fit only for the "outer darkness," now reflects the glory of heaven, bears the image of the Eternal, and enters upon a destiny, as high and lasting, as God can make it.

It must be plain that the benefits accruing to the Church, on earth and in heaven, from Revivals of Religion, *are incalculable.*

A community which enjoys the descent of the Holy Spirit, obtains an elevation not to be secured by any other means. At such times, God comes down from the heavens, and dispenses the blessings of his grace with a prodigality becoming himself. Distance, previously existing, is removed, and man ascends the Tabor of communion, meets his maker, and has fellowship, the same in nature, as that enjoyed by the "glorified throng." The people of the Saviour, while enjoying a season of revivals, feel in a peculiar sense the gates of heaven open, and the celestial stream of holy influence descends upon them, filling their hearts to overflowing. At such times, the weak become strong, the timid brave, the disconnected united, the retiring forward; one chases "a thousand and two puts ten thousand to flight." To enumerate the blessings then received or describe their value, would be as wise, as to attempt to number the sands, which girdle the Pacific, or tell the worth of the jewels, in the saint's "crown of life." We should not forget, that heaven takes part,

and the greatest part, in the assault made on the "powers of darkness," when revivals take place; and also shares in the triumph when success is secured. A fresh impetus is then given to the pulse of joy in heaven, and its vibrations are felt at the farthest extremes of that blessed world. Not an order of being, from the spirit of the thief, saved at calvary, when Jesus died, to the high arch-angel next the throne of the Eternal, but is thrilled with transport when sinners are saved. No other event calls forth such joy, exacts such tributes of praise, or is deemed so important. The launching forth of a magnificent world, with all its appurtenances, bright and fresh from the hands of its Creator, would beget joy and gladness among the sinless angels of God, but not such high, and ever increasing joy, as takes place when souls, are rescued from the indescribable wretchedness of the "second death." It, therefore, becomes a serious and most important enquiry, what can be done to secure REVIVALS OF RELIGION?

There is a qualification, *ministers* and *members* must have to insure success, strikingly expressed in a single word—"HOLINESS," without which, little can be accomplished. When the Church becomes holy, and Ministers holy, souls will be saved, by hundreds and thousands. It is requisite, absolutely requisite, that both should be holy. A holy minister and an unholy Church can accomplish little, because they are divided. The time which should be spent in "cryings and tears," for God to save, is spent in questioning the propriety of such high toned piety, and so much ado about religion. Satan gets the advantage, keeps it, and succeeds in ruining souls. In many cases, members in the Church are quite in advance of the Minister, in piety; consequently, the union of soul requisite to insure success cannot be obtained, and souls remain unsaved. But the unholy Minister is responsible to God, for standing in the way of sinners' salvation, and so is the unholy Church. The curse of excommunication, from the lips of the august Judge, will tell the *degree* of guilt

incured by both parties, and the ever echoing thunder-wails of damned souls will proclaim its *extent*. There is a cold hearted cruelty, a criminality in hindering, directly or indirectly, the work of God, which we at present do not comprehend, may be, cannot.

The great want of the Church is *Holiness!*—**HOLINESS!** We do not want so much to cultivate the minds, as the hearts. It is *well* to have a pure *style*, it is *better* to have a pure *soul*; the one is an accomplishment, the other a necessity. The most useful men have been the most holy. Clowes and Morgan, Bramwell and Smith, Finney and Caughey, men who have taken high ground in religion, have been eminently successful in promoting Revivals.

God has put an inseperable connection between holiness and usefulness, and we cannot divide them. We are peculiarly circumstanced, and our accountability is most momentous. The grave is fattening on sinners' bodies, and hell is echoing with their groans. What shall we do? Sit silently by and enjoy ourselves, and congratulate ourselves on being safe? God forbid it. Christ forbid it.

What shall we do? Mourn over past failures, and question the propriety of future efforts? Heaven and the Bible say, No! The cries of the dying sinner, and the triumphs of the expiring saint, bid us, go on. Hell with its groans, and heaven with its anthems, bid us, go on. Jesus from the cross and the throne, bids us, go on. Time, with its vicissitudes, and eternity, with its solemnities, bid us, go on. And we will,—proclaiming, while living, and testifying, when dying, that Jesus “**IS ABLE TO SAVE UNTO THE UTMOST ALL THEM THAT COME UNTO GOD BY HIM.**”

INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL PROGRESS,

Subservient to Ministerial Success.

AN ESSAY, READ AT THE ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE PRIMITIVE METHODIST MINISTERS' ASSO-
CIATION, HELD AT HAMILTON, APRIL 10TH, 1856.

BY REV. THOMAS CROMPTON.

MY DEAR BRETHREN,—

You will be aware, that the subject we have to consider is, “Intellectual and spiritual progress subservient to Ministerial success.” I most sincerely wish the task had fallen into better hands than mine; and though I much dislike apologies, I may be allowed to state, that for some months past, such have been my engagements, that I have felt really straitened for time to prepare my thoughts on this subject, in the manner I desired. You will, however, I believe, take kindly and indulgently what may be advanced.

Our subject is divisible into three parts :—*first*, mental progress; *secondly*, spiritual progress; and *thirdly*, the subserviency of such progress to ministerial success.

First,—MENTAL PROGRESS.

You will, I presume, readily acquiesce to the sentiment that *mind is the glory of man*. We also know that mind is that which places him at the top of all earthly existence, and makes him the connecting link between the purely spiritual and the material parts of the universe. Mind possesses dominion over matter, and often over circumstances; and hence

material objects, and the circumstantial occurrences that take place among men, as the mind comes into contact with them, are made to administer to our instruction; while facts that have been adduced, and thoughts shaped and uttered by other minds, can be taken up by our minds, and consecrated to the purposes of their ever onward progress. When mind is allowed free scope, and induced to put forth its powers, it shows itself possessed of powers of untold progression. Moving in a world of its own, from the lofty heights of thought to which it ascends, it can look down upon the blended aspects and events of the world beneath. We know, also, that mind can explore the province of literature, stop to gather store, or take a farther flight, like the bee in its range from shrub to shrub, from flower to flower, that it may be laden with the fruits of its industry. And we are aware too, that mind can come into close intercourse with mind; with keen glance contemplate its laws and operations; and from its deep metaphysical ponderings, evolve facts and principles of the utmost moment, and that may constitute data by which it can exercise itself anew, to its own exquisite pleasure, and the general good.

But mind must be improved and cultivated, or it will be a wild waste, prolific only in offensive weeds. Why is there such a difference between the mind of the wild man of the desert, and that of the cultivated and pious christian, calmly and intelligently contemplating the great truths of nature and revelation? We answer, cultivation and discipline make the difference. The one mind is dark, the other enlightened; the one undirected, the other cultivated; the one is wasted by inactivity, the other is exercised and improved. The Indian, dosing in his wigwam, has mind, the powers of which could climb the steep ascents of science, and traverse the great fields of knowledge, were they but unfolded. There is mind enough in the ignorant savage to rank among some of the brightest minds on earth; but it is like the incrustated gem, before the lapidary has, by his art, brought out its crystal or variegated beauties. Mind is designed to progress. It must have been God's in-

tention for it to realize ends in character with its own greatness. And in order to such a purpose, it must be exercised, strengthened, stored, and thus fitted for the high purposes of its destination. Its powers could not have existed for any lower end, than to improve always, and for ever.

We admit that various are the intellectual characteristics of men ; and therefore various grades of intellect exist among ministers of religion. Some have an aptitude for one thing, some for another of a very different character ; while others have a greatness of nature which gives them an insight, a directness, and an energy, which cause them to be triumphant in most things they take in hand : but however gifted by nature a person may be, it is his duty to discipline and improve those gifts. The Great Master, no doubt, specially qualifies, in many instances, by an adaptation of mind, for the sphere in which he intends us to move, so that there may be a John to melt with pathos, a Paul to plant in argument, and an Appollo to water in eloquence, while God himself giveth the increase. But whatever be the character of a minister's intellect, he should have an enlightened and healthy mind, a sound judgment, and a good stock of facts and principles in his mental treasure-house.

Some have extraordinary mental delicacy and refinement, which, in a sense, etherializes all their conceptions : and when this is the case with ministers, if they yield unrestrainedly to the tendencies of their mental constitution, they will, to a great extent, become metaphysical and psychological preachers. There is in them a cast to deal in abstraction, and that inclines to give refined, delicate, and a sort of profile view of truth. We see in them an exquisite subtilty. The mind is acute and far reaching ; but their thoughts put into words are often spun into two great nicities for general use. To persons of kindred spirits, this may be specially congenial and interesting. They can delight themselves in the exquisite touches and strokes which mind of like cast gives to mind. They may find high pleasure in that which is acute, in men-

tal scenes exhibited in the dim distance, in *multum in parvo* sentences, and highly suggestive words ; but the generality of men—the masses, with whom the christian minister has to do—need broader, bolder views of truth, its open countenance, and full length portrait. The world in general care little for the subtile and more minute aspects of things. A wider range of thought and a rougher handling of things, than the delicate though keen dealings of the subtile mind, is more suitable to awaken the reflections, and touch the heart of “the million.” It is well for the intellect of a preacher to be prepared to take a keen edge when required, and be fitted to go deeply and directly to things that lie concealed ; but it has more to do with God’s revealed will, and with man’s felt needs ; it has more to do with springing the mines of corruption in the human bosom and arousing the drowsy sensibilities of the heart ; it has more to do with tearing away the veil which obstructs moral vision ; it has more to do with pouring new streams of thought into the stagnant elements of mind, and leading the soul from evil to good, from Satan to God. Hence, there requires mental culture and discipline in ministers, that their minds may bring their highest powers to bear, in the best manner, upon that which is the great end of the Christian Ministry.

Other minds are highly passionate and imaginative. There is a great deal of the poetic element in their nature. They find congeniality in that which is scenic and emotional ; but there is a possibility of allowing these faculties to run wild ; so much so, that the mind finds little or no pleasure in any thing but the creations of imagination, or what is calculated to work upon the sympathies of our nature. When the moral sensibilities can be favourably affected by that which is imaginative and touching, a most important end is gained ; but in persons of this mental structure, the danger is in having too great a proportion of what merely melts and pleases, and not a due quantum of that which tells on the understanding and judgment, which produces conviction, and elicits thought :

and when this is the case with us, we are little else than sentimental. According as we can affect mind for good whether through the feelings or otherwise, a most important end is gained : but it is well to be fully awake to the fact, that we may produce a great impression on the feelings, and yet do little good. We may impress the feelings without producing a deeply inlaid conviction. The great end is to bring into action the thinking faculty in a right direction, by enlightening the understanding, and convincing the judgment ; and if we can thus influence the will to a right decision, we do work for truth, for man, for God. It is only as those inherent elements in man which we designate the tender and the beautiful—and that make him a subject to be affected and pleased—can be enlisted as instruments, by which we may gain access to, and work upon, his inner and higher nature, that by the use of them, we can be the means of great and lasting profit to him ; and yet, at the same time, we must not forget that the heart is a grand avenue to the mind. Here again we discern the need of mental discipline and improvement, that our best faculties and energies may be laid under cultivation to the greatest use.

It is highly important to study our own mental peculiarities. The greatest, as well as the least, minds have their peculiar stamp : their aptitudes both for excellencies and weaknesses. The God of nature has naturally fitted one man for one kind of work, and another for something else ; and hence, there are certain kinds of mental pursuits in which minds of a certain mould can never become largely successful ; and, therefore, there may be a misapplication of energy, even to the neglect of those powers with which we are constitutionally endowed. Yet, still, there ought not to be a total neglect of that kind of mental improvement for which we may not possess a great natural aptitude ; as, sometimes diligent perseverance makes up for nature's lack. " There are, for example, the reasoning and imaginative faculties : an ascertained defect of imagination should not induce a public

speaker to despair, but rather stimulate him to supply his want by cultivation, that he may be aided to adorn the rugged paths of research, and render attractive the hard and dry severities of argument : and a consciousness of some imbecility in the power of reasoning, and an exclusive tendency to what is brilliant and imaginative, should induce him to aim at the due adjustment of these respective claims, that what is merely mental and illustrative, may not supercede what is solid and essential."

As to other means to be used, for the purpose of mental progress, we may just say, that a spirit of inquiry, to collect facts, gather information, and know passing events : habits of observation, to notice objects and occurrences around ; intercourse with men ; and reading some of the best of books ; are ways and means by which to obtain materials for mental progress. But inquiry, observation, reading, and what else, will not be of much benefit, if the mind do not concentrate thought on the things we thus gather. What is obtained, as mental food, must enter into the mind, and be digested by thought, if it be of much service. If a man be not trained to think, he may know a great deal without being wise : he may be a *learned fool*. Wisdom is the right application and wise exercise of knowledge. Knowledge may have for its object, facts and truths, or mere suppositions and imaginations ; and thus it may be either true or false, good or bad ; and may lead either to folly or wisdom. There cannot be wisdom without knowledge ; but there may be much knowledge without wisdom. In order to make mental progress, we must think ; and the discriminating faculty must be exercised. True mental progress does not only comprise acquisitions, but the right use of those acquisitions by the mind. A person may gather much, and retain it ; but unless what he gathers enters into his intellectual being, by the exercise of thought, memory will resemble a great lumber room : the process of thought should make these collected-stores form a part of our intellectual-selves. How

frequently are facts and incidents met with which are allowed to pass away, simply from the idea that they do not immediately concern us, or for the want of spending a little thought upon them, when they might be secured, and made part of the stores of our mental depôt. This is, in many instances, our great misfortune; inasmuch, as there often come times when they could be made important basis of thought, or apposite illustrations. We may make use of every thing, either to increase our stock of information, or discipline the mind, or as warning against error, or for the purpose of impulse and encouragement in the path of goodness and usefulness. "Every thing," said the profound Foster, "is education: the thoughts you are indulging this hour; the society in which you spend the evening; and the conversations, walks, and incidents of to-morrow. Our faculties are kept in action; and it should be our duty to preside over that action, and guide it to some good result."

That man, in an important sense, may be said to live the longest who thinks the most and the best: his path through the world is one of thought: he lives his time well; little is lost; he fills it with thought as it passes away. But the man who thinks to no proper purpose, appears to spend life very loose: life to him seems a blank, and his passing through it like a leap over an empty chasm; and if, when on its brink, he cries, what is there? vacant echo answers what? With him, life contains nothing worthy of regard, because he has thought nothing. Young persons sometimes have men's heads and men's hearts: they are old in certain pursuits, because they have made them the subjects of much thought and practice. We may live to great purpose, by filling the mind with right thought, as a means to right action. **THIS IS MENTAL PROGRESS, AND ITS TRUE END.**

Secondly, SPIRITUAL PROGRESS. The cultivation of the heart is of more importance than that of the intellect. The words of Solomon may have special application to ministers.

of religion : " Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." We generally assume that those who espouse the ministerial office, and teach people the things of God, are subjects of substantial piety : but there have been many sad instances of religious defection even in ministers ; and there is danger of being so much occupied respecting the well-being of others, as not fully to secure our own. We may search the Scriptures ; study and preach for the good of our fellow-men, and at the same time fail in having a proper aim in those sacred exercises to our own spiritual improvement : we may fail in pressing the truths we preach to others upon our own hearts ; and we may come short of realizing, in our own experience, the salvation we offer by the Gospel to those who hear us. If any class of men need God's grace more than another, Ministers do ; that they may both save themselves, and those to whom they minister the Word of life.

We should be sure of a thorough work of saving grace in our own hearts. We all believe it is an awful thing to be a mere professor of religion : it is the assumption of a character by persons, that does not belong to them : it is the taking a religious profession for unholy ends. But, bad as this is, it is much worse to be ministers of the gospel, without having an heart-felt experience of the religion we preach to others. A man may know the Scriptures—may serve God at his altar, and his life may be devoted to promote the institutions and purposes of religion, and he may not have come to a real knowledge of the truth : he may be, all the while, short of realizing the end of religion in himself ; yea, he may turn the very ordinances of God into means of self-delusion. And the faithful Baxter, when speaking of a graceless minister, says, " Doth it not make you tremble when you open the Bible, lest you should read there the sentence of your own condemnation ? When you pen your sermons, little do you think you are drawing up indictments against your own souls. When you are arguing against sin, you are aggravating your

own. When you proclaim to your hearers the riches of Christ and grace, you publish your own iniquity in rejecting them, and your unhappiness in being without them. What can you do in persuading men to Christ,—in drawing them from the world,—in urging them to a life of faith and holiness, but conscience, if it were awake, might tell you that you speak all this to your own confusion. If you mention hell, you mention your own inheritance : if you describe the joys of heaven, you describe your misery, that have no right to it. What can you devise to say, for the most part, but it will be against your own souls ? Oh ! miserable life, that a man should study and preach against himself, and spend all his days in a course of self-condemning !” We should shudder at the bare idea of being graceless preachers ; and, also, tremble at the thought of very meagre religious experience. When we preach on the nature, evidences, and fruits of regeneration, let us charge those vital truths of our holy religion home to our own bosoms ; and let us press the question closely to our consciences—while we make no attempt to soften down its voice—have we in possession now the grace that has renewed our hearts ? Not were we once saved, but are we saved now, and do we stand at the present time in a state of complete acceptance with God ? Have we now the full-orbed light of his reconciled face ; and are there, in our experience and character, the blessed evidences of religious life and power.

It is this experience of the things of God,—this substantial piety, that should sanctify our studies, our spirit, our labours, and all our aims : this should be the impulse by which we move in the path of ministerial effort. This is necessary to be in us, as a divine afflatus, to actuate, penetrate, and energize our souls. The experience of gospel grace, in its fulness, power, and glory ; and to know it as a constant, living reality, is absolutely necessary, to constitute a true and faithful minister ; and without this, nothing in the world can make his work a pleasure. Whatever a minister knows,

or knows not of language, science, history, or literature : whatever he knows, or knows not of matter or mind, he must know God in Christ. All his studies should lead to God. " His physics and metaphysics should be reduced to an experimental theology." What will avail all the knowledge he can attain, if he has not learned Christ ? To know God—to have Christ in the heart, and to experience the living, witnessing, sanctifying Spirit's influence, is, we all know, an essential element, to form a right ministerial character ; and rather than that any minister be long without this, it would be much better, both for him and the Church, that he *leave* the work of the ministry for holier hands to do.

An intellectual and learned ministry is the call of some portions of the Church at the present day : but however important strength of intellect and learning may be, they can only subserve the ends of the Christian ministry as they are sanctified by religion ; for without it, those very qualifications which are made of such high account, might be employed against the vital and experimental doctrines of the gospel. The resources of mind and learning cannot thoroughly be laid under contribution to promote spiritual religion, if it be not a matter of experience ; and they will only be used to that great end, in proportion as it is enjoyed. Hence, how necessary that ministers not only be partakers of saving grace, but that they enjoy it in its fulness. The ministry is a work worthy of the greatest powers of mind, and of the highest cultivation ; but it is, indeed, a sad omen, when a talented, rather than a holy ministry, is the call of the Church. If this were to be the general aim of both Ministers and people, it would prove both the Church's and the world's greatest curse. While we would be second to none in placing a proper estimate upon mental ability in ministers, yet, we believe if ever the time comes when intellectual and literary talents are sought, as the almost exclusive qualifications for the Christian ministry,—when mind is looked for more than grace,—the education of the head more than that

of the heart,—and when learning is prized to the disesteem of substantial piety, it will be woe to the true glory and life of the Church. Germany is now cursed with a learned, because, to a great extent, it is a *graceless* and *infidel* ministry. We have only to look at German Neology, for abundant proof of the sad effects of unsanctified talent and learning, with respect to sound theology and spiritual religion. We sincerely and earnestly hope, that both by ourselves and our people, while respectable talent is properly regarded, in connection with the ministry, that the evangelism of the heart will ever be considered, above everything else, as the great essential to ministerial call and status amongst us ; for if there be not this inward evangelism, how can we expect an highly-toned evangelism of influence and labour ?

But, in addition to this spiritual state of mind, we ought to make spiritual progress. Though religion is always one thing—invariably and unaffectedly the same, yet we believe our *experience* of it should be *progressive*. We have already shown that personal piety is a necessary qualification for the ministerial office ; and if so, the more deep, lively, thorough, and progressive is the exercise of it in our hearts, the better it will be for ourselves and the people of our charge ; and the more will the true dignity of our calling be sustained. Especially are we, who are set apart to the work of promoting the interests of the Church, called upon to prove the deep things of God. If it be the duty of Christians in general to “grow in grace,” it is most emphatically our duty ; if they are to “leave the first principles of the doctrine of Christ, and go on to perfection,” such ought to be our conduct ; if they must be exhorted and stimulated to “press towards the mark” of vital holiness, and “be filled with the Spirit,” surely that should be a lively reality in our own experience. Let us, dear brethren, lament our religious meagreness : let us mourn over our comparative distance

from God : let us regret that our studies and Bible readings have been so much merely professional, as a means of enlightening, persuading, melting, and renovating others, while our hearts have been too little imbued and baptized by the Holy Spirit. "Although we have energy, and eloquence, and fluency, and fervency, and all the external qualities which seem to adapt us to the ministry of the Word, it may be, God sees many a poor old woman, in some retired cottage, in whom the qualification of pure, deep, heavenly-minded piety, personal and pervading, dwells more richly" than in us, his ministering servants. Let us stir ourselves up to a closer walk with God than we have hitherto experienced, and at once press on to rich religious enjoyments. We say to our people, there is a fulness before you, the depths, and heights, and lengths, and breadths of which cannot be measured. We tell them, on the authority of God's word, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled"; we tell them, to "ask and receive, that their joys may be full; to seek, and find, and knock, that the door may be opened": we tell them to "add to their faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity; and to let these things be in them and abound, that they may not be unfruitful in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ"; and we say, with Paul, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and make you increase and abound in love, to the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness." And as we preach this to others, it is our privilege to *prove* it in our own experience. If such be our people's privilege, it is our's; and if it be their duty, it is our's more so; because the influence of our position and character is much greater than their's. If our personal piety be not progressive, our zeal and energy will languish; inasmuch as the work of the ministry cannot be sustained by mere excitement. A Minister's heart and

lips need frequent re-touches with live-coals from the altar of God.

Thirdly.—We must now briefly notice the SUBSERVIENCY OF INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL PROGRESS TO MINISTERIAL SUCCESS.

This progress is of great importance to any class of men ; and especially must it be so to ministers of religion,—men who stand in the loftiest position in society,—men who have to deal with the mind and heart of the world, and through that *media* operate upon the world's moral destiny. There is an intellectual improvement without which a minister stands a very poor chance of being largely useful in the varied circumstances of his career ; and without progressive advancement in the things of God, his intellectual efforts, however high their order, or deep and wide their range, must lack a bias, an unction, and a life which will be the cause of comparatively little profit to the generality of men. But bright intelligence and deep piety combined ; mental strength and entire devotedness to God united in a minister ; will eminently fit him for his work, and enable him to wield the sword of the spirit so dexterously, and with such precision of aim, that he *must*, more or less, be successful in his work ; but if he do not possess those qualifications in some considerable degree, he will be *weak* as another man.

The work of the ministry is one in which the whole man should be tasked,—the intellect and its faculties, the mind and its treasury, the heart with its emotions and sympathies. All endowments and all acquirements, mental and spiritual, may be laid under contribution to ministerial success. Whatever a minister's opportunities for usefulness may be, he only can be successful in proportion as he possesses power for that end ; and assuming that he has requisite physical strength, according to his intellectual and spiritual progress, he attains power in the first place to exhibit and enforce the

truth, while the power of religion in his own heart, his deep solicitude for success, and the power of the Holy Spirit which he carries with him, combine, with the power of intellect, to accomplish the great good contemplated by the christian ministry. A minister who is not acting as he ought is every day throwing away a portion of power, and wasting his mental and spiritual self.

As in nature and art external effects spring from invisible causes, so it is respecting the results of ministerial labour. Every stream has its source. A house is first erected in the mind and then outwardly upon the solid earth. In every thing the ideal begets the actual; invisible power produces visible results, principle developes itself in outward manifestation. A Minister having to do with the minds and hearts of men, it is only as he exercises mental or spiritual power, or both, that he can see the results of his labours in souls renewed, and in an augmented and built up Church. By the use of this inward power he beholds outward effects, which redound to the glory of God and the good of man. The interests of the church require uncommon intellectual ability, at least in *some* of its agents; but if a minister have no more than ordinary power of mind, he may, and ought to unite good common sense and ordinary intelligence with deep spiritual unction; and if this power be diligently and zealously applied, he may, under God, be blessedly successful both in the conversion of souls, and in the spiritual prosperity of the Church.

Letting suffice what has been said respecting the suberviency of the mental progress to ministerial success, we would particularly press attention to the efficiency which *bright progressive religion* gives to Gospel Ministers. This enables them to enjoy themselves and makes them feel strong in their work. Eminent religiousness of habit will lead us to relish the highest spiritual things, and as a consequence our duties will take a deep spiritual cast. Our studies will have an earnest

holy end, in proportion as we drink into the depths of holiness. They will not be intellectual, literary or professional merely, but ulterior to all this; reaching beyond what is but circumstantial, and be in agreement with the sublime character, and blessed design of the gospel. Our seasons of secret prayer will be so many hallowed communions with God; and we shall come from the closet as from his presence-chamber, fragrant with the odour of heaven. Our preaching will not be sheer theorizing and ethical performances: but our warm hearts will pour out saving truth in gushing streams from the fountain head. The elements at the table of the Lord, will not be held up by us as the dry intellectual symbols of a once great reality; but as the emblems of soul nutriment and spiritual purity—present felt reality—enjoyed *now* by all who believe. Our visits to the chamber of sickness will be as angels' visits, and in the character of messengers of God. In fine, our work will not be made up of headless and useless formalities; but religion being enjoyed as an ever progressive thing, we shall be enabled to bear testimony in its behalf, not only from the word of God, but from experience, saying, "what we have felt and seen with confidence we tell."

Much in the way of piety is *expected* of Ministers. All eyes are upon them, in private and in public, in the pulpit and in the social circle; and this is not always to see what excellencies shine in them, and to admire their deportment, but sometimes, to watch for their failings, and then magnify them. Ministers are expected to be patterns of goodness, fervency, purity. They are expected to be humble, spiritual, devoted, self-denying, holy. They are expected to lead in the way of regeneration and holiness. And is this standard of ministerial piety too high? Is it above that standard which is set up in the word of God? Is it higher than the dictates of conscience prescribe? And is it irrelevant to the character of our calling and the sacredness of the duties it involves? No. "We should be all faith, love, zeal, spirituality, humility,

as it were the personification of all these qualities. Religion in its brightest and best traits should be wrought in our natures : should become part of ourselves. If it be possible, we should be as Christ was, religion incarnate."

Our people are likely to be affected by the frame of *our* minds. If we are dry and savourless we shall not be the means of producing much warmth of religious feeling in our congregations. When our hearts are cold our preaching will be cold. When we live at an awful distance from God, we shall be unable to bring our hearers forward to high toned piety. But they will feel the influence of our close intercourse with God. Our deeply imbrued spirits will be felt through the whole sphere of our operations. It will breathe in the pulpit, and be everywhere diffusive, pervading all our duties and labours. Then we shall awaken others to a right appreciation of their "high Christian privilege;" we shall lead them into the holy of holies and near the throne, that their life may be hid with Christ in God : we shall conduct them into the possession of the goodly land of christian heritage, with its green pastures, refreshing streams, and clusters of fruit, and its milk and honey, corn, and wine. If our "fellowship is with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ," we may say to those whom we have begotten in the gospel. "Be ye followers of us as dear children."

And the power of religion in the ministry exerts itself, not only to the edification of the Church, but to the conversion of souls. The holiest men among Christian Ministers have been most successful in bringing souls to Christ. It has been so with the fathers of our own community ; so it has been in the history of Methodism ; so it has been throughout the annals of our protestantism ; so it has been in every age of the Christian Church ; so it is now, and ever will be. They have an earnest anxiety for the salvation of men which is the product of the fine perception of the things of God, and of the

deep religious feeling that is in them. They have a deep travail of soul for the conversion of sinners which none but they can feel. They have a zeal that acquires strength and intensity from the bright ever burning fire, on the altar of their own hearts. And they have a noble purpose which is never satisfied but in ministerial success.

But though we should not be satisfied without proofs that our ministry is not in vain in the Lord,—without souls for our hire, and a flourishing Church to crown our toils; yet ministers must not confine their success to present or ascertained usefulness. While we consecrate all our powers and influence to the great work in which we are engaged, and put forth our most strenuous efforts to realize visible success, we should look beyond the present and encourage ourselves with the thought of what an harvest of good also may be reaped from the field of our labours in the future. The word of God faithfully lived and preached shall not return void. The seeds of Divine truth dropped by ministers possess amazing vitality. It has a germinant power that may, and doubtless in many cases will, unfold itself in fresh forms of good for ever. Thought begets thought, spiritual influence begets its like. And if some of the good seed fall upon strong soil, the great enemy will not be able to destroy it all. Some wind of heaven, sooner or later, may catch it up, and deposit it on more congenial ground. The thoughts of preachers, writers, and poets, shaped and uttered centuries ago, are living, acting, spreading now; and older thoughts than these that were narrated by Jesus along the sea of Galilee, on Olivet's top, or in the busy streets of Jerusalem; and by his apostles as "they went everywhere preaching the word," have become treasured up in people's minds, and are now ruling the best portion of mankind. Right thoughts, though white with the frost of centuries, are at the present time working for good, and will continue to do so in the ages to come; therefore, our utterances may be productive, in

some thirty, in some sixty, and in some an hundred fold, when our heads are laid in the dust. Then dear brethren, let us consider what *kind* of thoughts our's should be ; and how well our hearts should be *prepared* by knowledge and grace to indite a good matter, that we may extensively subserve the great end of the ministry.

And now my dear brethren, what more can we say. I fear your attention has been occupied too long already ; but I would say a few words more if my doing so, could clinch what has been advanced ; if it would rivet any thing in our remarks that is worthy, like a nail in a sure place with its point bent on the other side. What a vast amount of addresses, written and oral, which though they gain full and free assent from the judgement and conscience, are nevertheless un-reduced to practice. As we have united together for the purpose of mutual improvement relative to the important duties of our office, let us not rest short of reaping all the good we can possibly derive from the doings of an association of this nature.

Let our theological belief be in perfect conformity with the word of God, while our religious experience keeps in blessed unison with that belief. Let our views of gospel truth be clear and comprehensive. Let us seek clearly to understand and properly to distinguish the primary truths of the gospel system, their relation to each other, and to other truths that are of a secondary nature, that our body of divinity may, like the natural body, "be fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth." Let us up my brethren, and think, and live, and preach, as thoroughly devoted servants of God. Let us *up* to higher attainments and greater deeds. Let us *up*, to the vigorous exercise of our powers, and to the cultivation and depth and strength, of the best sympathies of our hearts. Let us *up*, and gird our loins for the battle and the race. Let us *up*, and in the might

of God ascend the steeps of all difficulty. Let us *up*, and while we survey the vast field of labour before us, and the great necessity there is for both agency and efficiency, let us consecrate ourselves to the work of God, with perseverance, and skill, and energy, bent in noble purpose, and high resolve to do something that will be felt and seen in the day of reckoning. Let us *up*, and praying to be inspirited from on high, act our part, and we may rest on the assurance, "your labour shall not be in vain,—*shall not be in vain in the Lord.*"

ADDRESS,

Delivered at the Ordination of

MESSRS. IS. RIDER, AND R. CADE,
PRIMITIVE METHODIST MINISTERS, AT THE CON-
FERENCE OF 1856, HELD IN JOHN STREET CHURCH,
HAMILTON.

BY REV. THOMAS CROMPTON.

MY DEAR BRETHREN,

You are engaged in a great work: you sustain the most sacred of offices: you occupy the position of messengers between God and accountable immortals: and as it is my lot to address a few words to you on this particular occasion, I earnestly wish them to be means of good, in as large a degree as possible; and, therefore, our remarks shall be directed solely to that end.

1st. I beg to remind you of the great importance of the Ministerial Office.

You are aware, dear Brethren, that the Christian Ministry is a calling of the highest moment: unspeakably vast interests depend upon it, both for time and eternity. God has very much connected with it the execution of the purpose of his mercy, in the salvation of the world. If his truth is to be propagated; if the knowledge of his glory is to cover all lands; if the story of the cross is to be told to the dwellers on the earth; if mankind are to be disciplined to the Saviour; and if the Church of Christ is to be extended and built up, an agency must be employed, to accomplish

the work. And while we readily admit that God calls into requisition various instrumentalities and events, to subserve his bright designs, among men, and that all his people are workers together with him in the great work of the world's conversion; yet, it appears, the Christian ministry is the most prominent means employed for that end; for how can the people believe in him of whom they have not heard, and how shall they hear without a preacher, and how shall men preach except they be sent? And the agency which has such a place in the divine arrangements as that of the ministry of the word of life, and which has to contribute so much in filling this mighty chasm in the world's requirements; involves an importance the nature and magnitude of which we cannot fully conceive. "For after that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of preaching, to save them that believe."

We are of those who believe that preaching is not a mere incidental appendage to the church. We think that forms and ceremonies ought not to be the central points of attraction. A sound and healthy Christianity demands that what is merely ceremonial should be subordinate to the preaching of the word. It is popery that aims not so much to unfold the intellectual, rational, and spiritual nature of man, as to excite wonder at its mysteries and aggrandizements, and veneration for its sacraments, priesthood, and its legends of a saintly mythology. We are protestants, and believe that the altar of the priest must still yield to the pulpit of the preacher. We say, with the sixteenth century men, "preach the word, the pure word of God."

All men have a purpose to answer, a place to fill, a part to perform. A similar wonderful harmony to that which runs through all nature, attaches to persons, offices, and callings. We might easily illustrate this by referring from the lowest condition in society to the highest, from the private citizen to the sovereign, and from the humblest christian in the church, to the most gifted and influential. And O! how solemnly

important is the place which the Christian minister has to fill ! When we consider that the ministry is to answer the greatest of all ends—to “convert sinners from the error of their ways, and save souls from death”—that it has to do with God and eternity,—and with man’s undying interests,—and that no means are equal to it in relation to the world’s ultimate moral destiny, we may tremble under a sense of its vast responsibilities. We should often prayerfully ponder over these responsibilities.

2nd. Aim at mental improvement as a means of fitting you the more ably to discharge your duty in preaching the word of life.

We shall say comparatively little respecting this subject. You know that the school-master is abroad ; you know that with regard to mental acquirements, the pulpit should keep in advance of the pew ; you know knowledge is power ; and in proportion as a minister possesses it, if it be sanctified he may be a greater and more useful man. You know it is needful for you to read, converse, observe, and think, especially on subjects that pertain to your calling, in order to augment your stores of intelligence. But as the end of the Christian ministry is, usefulness, let your acquirements be of the useful kind, rather than the ornamental. And ever remember this fact,—you will always find it necessary to grow in knowledge, in order to subserve the work of the ministry, if you live past three score years and ten.

Perhaps there is sometimes too large a proportion said, on occasions like this, respecting intellectual cultivation. While we wish not to say one word that would have the effect of undervaluing the acquisition of knowledge in relation to the ministry, and affirm that it is very proper and necessary to direct the attention of young ministers to it, and stimulate them to mental attainments ; yet, the ministry must not be made the means of mere intellectual exercise and display. How often do young ministers feel much more anxiety, and

bestow far more labour on the intellectual cast of their sermons, and the finish they wish them to have in arrangement, in well-turned periods, in an elegant selection of terms, in rhetorical flourish, and in high-sounding verbiage, than about how much gospel truth they can put into them, and how to utter it with effect: what trains of thought and reasoning, what illustrations and figures they must adopt, to speak in "thoughts that breathe and words that burn"; how they can temper their thoughts and words, to break, or point them to pierce the heart; and how to give them life and shade, so as to engage attention, convince the judgment, and convert the soul, or edify the church. Where this exists, it is, indeed, a sad fault; and if we must speak fully our sentiments respecting it, we cannot refrain to say, that we consider it an insult alike to man's highest nature, and to God.

But while you shun, as you would a serpent's path, an error of this kind, at the same time diligently study improvement in knowledge; ever remembering, that it can be made a great instrument of usefulness; and, that you may be encouraged as far as such a consideration should have effect, remember, also, that real worth will always be esteemed by right minds and sound hearts. Also be stimulated by the fact that this is an age eminent for the diffusion of knowledge. By the words of an eloquent and esteemed living author I would encourage you:—"The oligarchy of literature is now republic. The learning once banked up in Universities has burst its restraints, and spread far and wide its waters, so that where few drank before, millions now slake their thirst. In short, learning has ceased to be the monopoly of a few, to become the possession of many. The hearer in the pews can judge of all the preacher says in the pulpit. A pompous *ipse dixit*, or a bombastic flourish, goes for nothing now, though episcopal lips give utterance to it. A divine truth which finds an echo in man's conscience, or shines in its own light, or is seen to be sustained by the bible, or by the reasoning of unprejudiced minds, is hailed as a herald from the skies,

though it should be enunciated from a tub, or uttered in the market place." Be encouraged then, my brethren, to improve in mental strength and knowledge; but oh! ever mind to let your aim be that improvement which shall subserve the great end of the Christian ministry.

3rd. We next briefly allude to pulpit preparation.

The true business of a minister, in respect to preparation for the pulpit, is to get as thoroughly acquainted with the truths of the Bible as may be; and to know how to apply them to the consciences and hearts of men. The one is accomplished by study, the other mainly by practice. The study of the Bible is the great pre-requisite for pulpit ministration. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God; and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." While we admit the applicability of these words to all classes of Christians, they specially are suited to the Christian minister. They were the utterances of an aged and experienced apostle to Timothy, a young minister of the gospel; and besides their general use they were obviously intended to remind Timothy that this perfection as a preacher of the truth, consisted in his acquaintance of God; and that from this infallible source he was to become thoroughly furnished for every good work.

The grand end of the gospel ministry is to impress upon the minds of men the contents of that book which is God's revealed will, in order to effect their enlightenment and regeneration. The study of other books are only of use to the Christian minister according as they assist him to understand and explain the book of God. All sciences, systems, and creeds are to be tried by this book. Here are precept and doctrine of such a nature, that they cast all others into the shade;—and because they are heaven inspired. Here are depths of learning and store of thought of inexhaustible amplitude. Here are treasures of knowledge, poetry, eloquence

and also sublimity, beauty and strength of style, in comparison with which the contents of all other books are poor. Therefore the general and careful study of the scriptures will enable you to bring things out of the Divine treasury new and old ; and to break plentifully the bread of life to those who hear you.

I would caution you against that almost *infinitesimal* divisioning in sermons and that skeletonized preaching in which all the time of a discourse is occupied by the preacher hastily skipping from one point to another, that he may complete his round within due limits, and which leaves his audience little better for instruction than when he begins. Bring your minds to bear upon the leading truths of Revelation ; and let there be condensed and solid thought bestowed upon them. Let your sermons be full of beaten gold. Often write your thoughts, then grasp them, yet do not confine yourselves mechanically to every word you have written, but let the untrammelled mind have free scope to use new thoughts and words, that are the creations of the then present time, when the mind is bent to its task in full exercise. And while you are at the trouble to beat your gold and exercise yourselves much in composition, yet at times, after drawing your outline, speak *impromptu* ; be not afraid occasionally to pour out your thoughts in extemporaneous effusions on subjects with which you are familiar. This will vary your mental exercises, keep you from pursuing one ever plodded routine, increase your strength of mind, and give you additional confidence in yourselves.

But, my dear Brethren, pray over your preparations for the pulpit. Dr. Payson, who was a man eminent for prayer, considered the time he spent in prayer, in relation to his study, was his best spent time ; and was of opinion that he composed his sermons in *less* time, and with far greater ease, when he prayed much over them, besides being of better quality, while his mind became largely imbued with the Spirit's influence ; and, therefore, the more qualified for

delivering with effect what he had prepared. Let your studies be penetrated, pervaded, and actuated by prayer, and you will, by this practice, reap important advantages : your aim will more uniformly be to do good : your sermons will be more in unison with the mind of the Spirit ; they will possess proportionate unction ; and you will go forth to deliver, in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, the blessed truths of your divine message. After all that Philology, literature, science, history, discovery, and Biblical criticism can do, the Christian minister needs heavenly illumination—the *living light of the eternal Spirit*.

4th. Let your preaching be richly evangelical.

Understand me when I say, your office is specially to *preach the Gospel*. While you shun not to declare the whole counsel of God, let the *good news* of redeeming grace be ever on your lips. This is strictly the gospel. And if a full, free, and present salvation be prominent in every sermon you preach to your fellow-sinners, you will be emphatically and eminently *preachers of the gospel*. It will be your work to speak of the nature of Christian duties and moral virtues : it will be your work to give scriptural views of the Divine attributes : it will be your work to speak of the solemnities of judgment, and the awfulness of retribution : it will be your work to proclaim the demands and terrors of the law, to denounce God's threatenings, and warn the impenitent sinner of his doom. But though this is part of God's pure word, and has its place, yet it is not strictly *the gospel*. It will be your duty to awaken the thoughtless, and arouse the slumbering sinner ; and produce conviction in the hearts of the unconverted : it will be your duty to search out the latent mazes of sin in the human bosom ; and, as much as in you lies, to exhibit a withering exposure of popular vices ; while you show the folly and danger of living

“without God and without hope in the world”: but this, though it answers such an important end, is not *the gospel*. It will be your duty to build up the Church, and by your ministrations to suit the almost endless gradations in the experience of the flock of God; to encourage the faint-hearted, confirm the wavering, counsel the perplexed, and feed the spiritually-minded: but though this may help devotion, and have great influence for good, it is, nevertheless, not *the gospel*. Mind, my dear Brethren, to publish the glad-tidings of a Saviour to lost men. This must be done, and the other not left undone. While Paul cared so much for the welfare of the Churches: while he controverted errors, defended doctrines; counselled, exhorted, and had on him “the care of all the Churches”; amid all these, he could say, “from Jerusalem, round about to Illyricum, he had fully preached the gospel.” He said also, “We preach Christ crucified,” and adopted the exclamation, “How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and that bring *good tidings of good things*.” Let this, dear Brethren, be the theme of your pulpit ministrations. Exhibit the cross: proclaim its doctrines. Put into your sermons clear and burning statements of the love of God in Christ; making a full declaration of the great fact of the atonement. Tell to men, “This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” Say, “Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.” Without this, the sublimest strains of pulpit oratory are as nothing to the sin-stricken soul: without this, the most soaring, burning, and melting eloquence is as sounding brass to guilty men: without this, a wide, deep blank rests in the ablest preaching. Bring to view the cross, then—simply, clearly, boldly. Speak of Jesus with an eloquence that comes from a feeling heart, warmed by his love. Proclaim him in the fulness of his sacrificial merits,—in the plenitude of his mediatorial grace,—and in all the glory of his saving character,

5th. Manner and Style in Preaching.

As to these, we say, first, avoid all mannerism and clap-trap. Be no mimic preachers : be yourselves : and if, with respect to natural qualities for public speaking, you are not of the most highly gifted, be yourselves notwithstanding. Study naturalness : the more natural, the more perfect. Guard against a heavy, dull, monotonous delivery on the one hand ; and against an uniformly high stentorian utterance on the other. The former will be an hindrance to the acceptance of the word : the latter will prove a physical injury, by constantly taxing too much of your strength. Let your style be plain, pointed, terse. Bring little, or no refinement of speculation into the pulpit ; and if, occasionally, a moment or two be spent in verbal criticism while preaching, yet, take up exceedingly little time with it in public : let verbal criticism be the work of your private study : there find out suitable words, and sound speech ; and be prepared to use them in the pulpit.

Also, as preachers of the gospel, let there be in you an utter absence of self. It is, indeed, a sad thing to display self in the pulpit, instead of Christ and his salvation. We can pardon a mere orator on secular and political themes, when we see his countenance beaming with self-complaisance, the product of a warm and inflated admiration within ; when we see self in determined competition with this subject to gain precedence of it in the estimation of the listening throng ; and when self-plausive indications in his looks, tones, gestures say how acute and adroit I am, and what a shrewd clever fellow is addressing you ; this, though terribly repulsive, may, we say, be pardonable in the mere declaimer and orator on things of comparative insignificance ; but the like of it in the minister of religion while standing as the ambassador of God to his guilty fellowmen, and while dealing with the weal or woe of immortal souls, is indeed *unpardonable*. To see a man in the pulpit with his "tumour of verbiage,"

as John Foster designated wordiness, full of empty display, ridiculously showy, and yet little or nothing to show, while a view of self-glorying runs through the whole exhibition, is one of the most loathing of loathsome sights.

Be simple and earnest. The gospel comes to man with unadorned simplicity, and there is in it such an absence of wrought up attraction, that if there be in the preacher a meritorious display, if it be put in a tawdry garb there is a lack of harmony between the message and the messenger, between the matter and the manner of its delivery. When the gospel is so simple that it places salvation upon a belief of the truth as it is in Jesus, it should be communicated with a simplicity of manner. The truest and strongest eloquence is the simplest. Tame and very common place modes of expression may be much eschewed, and yet truth be made to stand forth invested with a charming simplicity; for the more simply the truth is delivered, the more engaging and effective it is. Luther was for many years not only the most celebrated but the greatest pulpit orator living; and yet how simple he was. While his learned treatises in the defence of his 95 theses were very useful to the theological faculty and the literary world, his simple pulpit eloquence in the vernacular language, perhaps, did more for the Reformation in its first stages than the labours of his pen. Both were needed in those times. But it was his tongue that gave such an impulse to the great cause with the masses of his countrymen. It was his tongue that moved and swayed the popular mind. It was his tongue that set in motion and gave an impetus to those holy elements which at length waxed into a tempest, and swept and aroused the minds of the multitude. Though he was naturally gifted, and his gifts had been admirably cultivated and disciplined, it was particularly this strong, simple, practical sense that brought him at once into sympathy with the people. A natural and unaffected simplicity is sure to find an echo in every sound mind, and will often command a cordial response from the heart.

Be earnest preachers. While you guard against doing violence to your physical nature, preach with warmth and animation. Such are the grand themes of the gospel that lucid perceptions, enlarged views, distinct and vivid thoughts concerning them, cannot but prompt to warm and eloquent utterance. If a preacher be thoroughly interested, what subjects throughout the whole range of knowledge are so adopted to excite a speaker's spirit, to move in their lowest depths the energies and passions of his nature, to arouse the elements of his emotional being, to inbreed all the feelings which are the very life of true eloquence, and to task to the utmost all the resources of language, as those with which he is furnished in the book of God. We can hardly see how a man can be cold while preaching of the love of God in the gift of his only begotten son, of the wondrous atonement made for sin by the sacrifice of Christ, of the grand doctrines of forgiveness and moral transformation, of the divine and inner life brought into the human soul and maintained there by the indwelling spirit, of the great day of judgement, and of interminable bliss or woe. Surely if any thing can do it these subjects should rekindle soul fires, and cause the minister to speak in words of flame.

The gospel delivered without warmth is not likely to do much execution; therefore let your preaching be weighty and intense. The present age too is an age of emphasis. Those are days not only of research but power and fire. Men need arousing as if with electric shocks; and when aroused they need to be kept awake. Every thing should now be intensified; it does not do for persons to sit under discourses which are so indifferently delivered that the mind can without effort give itself up to a thousand wanderings. Along with instruction, sensation and power are required. If ever there was a period which demanded the combination of high thought and intensity it is the present. With regard to preaching the days of soothing syrups and healing opiates are gone. Old events and truths, realities and facts, may be put into startling

shapes, singed with fire, and sent with electric force; and this can all be done with simplicity.

6th. Let faithfulness and courage be characteristic in you.

The man who intends to act his part with proper effect in the sphere in which God has placed him will find that life is no day-dream, no holiday, no silvery path in which ease and sun-shine and fair genial weather are enjoyed; but he will find life a battle, an earnest unremitting battle: he will have to be buffeted by the storm, and there will be times when he must summon up his powers to stirring and vigorous contest. You will have your trials, and trials not only in the christian life, but which are peculiar to your calling, trials the poignance and bitterness of which no heart can know but your own. You will be tempted to discouragement and may have to say, "who hath believed our report." You may have to mourn over supineness and neutrality in some who should join hands with you in the good work of God; it may be instead of rendering all possible help, they are not only inactive, but fickle, and fault finding. You may also beside this be the subject of strong temptation, while watchings, solitudes and cares burden your minds and oppress your hearts. These, and such as are of a kindred nature, are times when your patience will be tried and your meekness and courage put to the test.

Remember then that however useful may be your life, and however distinguished your career, there will be enough to convince you that you really have few sources of qualification unless the service itself be your chief pleasure. You may expect a crown of thorns as well as your master. You must be prepared for the misinterpretation of your motives the misrepresentation of your actions, and in some instances the failure of your best efforts. You may seem for a time to labour in vain. You may suffer reproach, you may meet with malignant hostility or hollow friendship; but a pure con-

science and a smiling God will be an ample recompence." Amid all however patience, piety, faithfulness and energy, will support you. Awake the energies of your nature, and let a thoughtful mind direct and appropriate them. And those energies combined with holy enthusiasm and faith in God will bear you onward in your work.

7th. Pray for God's blessing upon your labours.

To seek help from God in prayer is of great importance to the minister. You know that ministerial success is to be found in God's blessing, and therefore it is the minister's duty and privilege to direct his earnest supplications to the great master saying,—“Prosper thou the work of our hands the work of our hands prosper thou it.” If you bear in mind that Paul may plant and Apollos may water but it is God who giveth the increase, and that our best schemes and endeavours are vain without his blessing, you will perceive the necessity of forming a rule of conduct upon the apostolic admonition, “continue instant in prayer.”

Did the Christian Ministry link itself more closely to God in regard to its great duties, acknowledging a simple and believing dependence upon him, we doubt not but there would follow more abundant prosperity. While you tax the intellect and heart, and your physical strength also in preparation for the discharge of duty recognize the declaration,—“Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit saith the Lord.” To pray for the bestowment of spiritual gifts is necessary that you may advance to christian maturity, and experience the full power of the truths you preach to others. Pray for strengthening and sustaining grace under your onerous duties. Lift your eyes to him from whom cometh your help. Pray for success that you may not labour in vain nor spend your strength for nought; for what is the minister in the exercise of his function, without the help of God? Without that help is it likely that he will thoroughly withstand the power of

Satanic agency, worldly interest, and fleshly lusts? Without that help will he endure the discouragements and trials of his office? Without that help will he be a faithful steward of the mysteries of God, and a true expounder of christian doctrine? Without that help can the gospel be preached aright? Without that help can it be preached with that holy yearning for souls, with that faith and unction and with that power of persuasion which ought to accompany it? Oh! my dear brethren you know that we need something which is out of ourselves, something *ad-extra*, a superhuman power, or our preaching will not be in proper demonstration. Prayer will enable you to come near to God, and take hold of his strength. Some of the most successful ministers have been eminently men of prayer. They wrestled mightily with God in the closet and prevailed. They there received strength and came forth endued with power from on high, to achieve their glorious moral victories. And my dear brethren, never forget that your strength is in God.

8th. Let all the glory of your success be given to God.

However able and successful you are as ministers of the New Testament, always bear in mind, "that neither is he that planteth any thing neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." Usefulness is the great end of the christian ministry, and we should not be content without realizing it; but there is even danger in usefulness—danger of not giving the glory to God,—danger of saying my success, my success!—and of arrogating to ourselves part of the glory that belongs to God alone. Thus Satan may even make our usefulness a bribe. The Rev. James Parsons of York, England, who has been styled the prince of modern preachers, and with whom I am personally acquainted, once said he remembered to have been told "My son beware of the bribe of talent: this was understood—Beware of the bribe of applause and this was understood. But then there was another caution, which was a secret.—Beware of the bribe of useful-

ness ; this could not be understood." Yes my brethren there is reason to beware, for even *usefulness* may be made the means by which to feed vanity and pride. But while you realize success in pulling down strongholds, in taking the prey from the mighty, and in building up the church, remember that all you are and all you do, are owing to God's gift and power in and through you : and therefore say, " not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory."

In conclusion dear brethren, let me say love your work ; be devotees : this will prove the spring of ministerial action. If you love it not, duty will be mere formality, while listless languor will prevade your doings. Be holy in body and soul. Let entire devotedness to God, much prayer, aptitude to embrace opportunities of doing good characterize your lives. By study and intellectual discipline prepare yourselves with whatever human qualification you can attain ; and then, let a diligent, and well directed energy inspirit all your doings : and thus being " steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, your labour shall not be in vain ;" and the day of God will reveal a glorious harvest of fruit from the field of your toils.

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